

WINTER NOTES ON YELLOW-BELLIED SAP-  
SUCKER (*Sphyrapicus varius*).

BY C. H. MORRIS.

On January 15, 1905, on one of the coldest days of the winter, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—a fine male—dropped in near my lunch counter, and from that time until now, February 15, he has been about nearly every day. The first time I saw him he was sticking close to the ground on the southeastern side of a maple catching the first level rays of the sun. With shoulders rounded and feathers ruffled he looked to be as cold as was the weather. On the 23d, the temperature having risen to thawing point, he drilled his row of holes in the maple, where first I saw him, and during the forenoon never once left his post. The sap ran sluggishly and his appearance matched it. I had noticed him flying about a couple of plum trees upon which the dried fruit hung in abundance—Dawson plums they are—and on the 29th, while watching his scarlet-throated lordship, I saw him pluck a plum. He did not insert it in a crack as his family does with nuts, but ate it partially, dropping the stone. His favorite method is taking small bits of the fruit as it hangs. On the 27th, the sap from the holes had frozen into icicles some five inches long, and Yellow-belly sat below, and nipping off the points leisurely, ate the ice. Yesterday, February 14, the coldest day we have had, with the temperature 8°, the bird flew on the lunch-box in which I had just placed cracked hickorynuts and walnuts. Close by him was suet in great plenty, which the Downy and Hairy feed from almost exclusively, seeming to have no taste for the nuts. But Yellow-bellied ate greedily of the nuts, thus following in the footsteps of his brother, Red-bellied Woodpecker, who scarcely ever will touch the meat or suet.

Mr. Dawson, in his charming work, "The Birds of Ohio," gives this latitude as about the northern winter range of this bird. February 11, another one came, this time an immature specimen, but he only remained for two or three days.

The birds are in the habit of frequenting a spruce and pine tree close by, and several times they have been observed eat-

ing the small nodules of the pitch that has, during the preceding year, exuded from the tree.

Morgan Co., O.

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## NESTING OF THE YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER.

BY J. CLAIRE WOOD.

I know of but two sets of eggs of this species taken in the county. I was collecting birds in a thick woods on P. C. 49, Ecourse township, on May 10, 1891, when I met with a party of young egg collectors. Soon after I heard one calling that he had found a Downy Woodpecker's nest. On being told the birds were Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, he was greatly surprised. The cavity contained three fresh eggs, which he left for a larger set, but there is a humorous sequel. It seems that after I left a consultation was held and it was decided to take the eggs for fear I might return and do a little collecting myself. When the collector arrived home his father, a well known oologist, decided to return at once and secure the bird in order to discover, by dissection, the number of eggs that would have been laid. This was done, and when he cut open the bird next day, Great Caesar! it was the male.

This is the most abundant and noisy woodpecker of the woodlands here during April. Before the expiration of the month the majority are already mated and looking for nesting sites, but after drilling numerous test holes, in one case devoting three days to a single excavation, they apparently feel a renewal of the migratory impulse and fade away toward the north; so when, on April 21, 1903, in Section 3, Van Buren township, I saw a female drilling into a dead stub in the thickest portion of a low swampy woods, I merely watched her awhile and passed on without further consideration. Chancing to pass the stub on May 19 I tapped it and out popped madame's head—the surprise was mutual. As I ascended and paused at her level she remained motionless, in fact, did not move until my finger was extended, when she retreated before it, but paused just out of reach and proceeded to drill a hole into the end. As it was withdrawn she followed closely until